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CIA Torture: the Nature of the Beast From the Minds of Depraved Sadists

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January 9-11, 2015

In all the reporting and comment about the CIA's torture program there hasn't been much cover concerning the nature of the beasts involved. This is probably because it is difficult to imagine what goes on in the minds of depraved sadists who destroyed the bodies and brains of so many people by subjecting them to physical and mental torment.

The heavily censored ("redacted") summary of the Senate Committee report on the vile behavior of CIA officials includes descriptions of how they could "at their discretion, strip a detainee naked, shackle him in the standing position for up to 72 hours, and douse the detainee repeatedly with cold water." Other torture involved a suspect being shackled "hand and foot with arms outstretched over his head (with his feet firmly on the floor and not allowed to support his weight with his arms)." The nauseating compilation of human vileness goes on and on.

But what sort of person is it who can without pity inflict such suffering on a human being? Do they look just like you and me? And what goes on in their minds when they subject a helpless person to, for example, the innocently-named "facial slap"?

Make no mistake, a “facial slap” in a CIA prison cell is not what we see in movies when an insulted female takes an open-handed swipe at the smirking dial of a ratfink ass-grabber. The word “slap” is inappropriate in the context of a CIA torture-party, because what the sadists do, in the cause of defending democracy, is to hit the side of the victim’s face very hard indeed but not quite hard enough to cause blackout. It’s quite an art, in fact; just are administration of the “facial hold” and the “abdominal slap” and all the other delicately-named torture savageries.

Try to put yourself in the mind of the man (or woman — remember the photograph of the smirking Ms Lynddie England in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq) who can look calmly at a helpless shackled weeping person who is clad in rags with stinking crap running down his legs and screaming for mercy and then take a “facial slap” at him. It’s pretty difficult to imagine. But these people exist. They prosper. They are valued members of a most important US government agency.

The oath taken by every CIA employee is that “I do solemnly swear that I will administer justice without respect to persons, and do equal right to the poor and to the rich, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent on me, according to the best of my abilities and understanding, agreeably to the Constitution, and laws of the United States. So help me God.”

We now know that “all the duties” of these public employees have included merciless torture of captives, including totally innocent people who were caught up in the catastrophic ‘War on Terror’ by accident or — all too often — by entrapment by criminals who told naïve CIA dummies that their personal enemies were terrorists.

It was hoped by the CIA and most of the Congress and regrettably very many ordinary American citizens that the fate of the victims who were trapped in the grasp of sadistic psychopaths who tortured them could be brushed away like the dust off a bar-room table. But some of the story has come out. Not much : but enough to make us wonder what on earth we don’t know, such are the horrors, the barely believable evil revealed in the heavily censored official summary.

The US Senate Committee that reported on the gruesome excesses of CIA operatives who tortured people recorded that “the detainees at COBALT [one of the secret sites in Afghanistan]

were walked around naked or were shackled with their hands above their heads for extended periods of time. Other times, the detainees at COBALT were subjected to what was described as a “rough takedown,” in which approximately five CIA officers would scream at a detainee, drag him outside of his cell, cut his clothes off, and secure him with Mylar tape. The detainee would then be hooded and dragged up and down a long corridor while being slapped and punched.

Let’s try to put ourselves in the minds of the CIA operative in Afghanistan who slept contentedly all night in his comfortable accommodations and woke up and shaved and showered and dressed and had a nourishing breakfast and then strolled over to the secret prison to “administer justice agreeably to the Constitution, and laws of the United States. So help me God.” Let’s call him Buddy.

Buddy's arrival for performance of his duties would begin with a comradely greeting, no doubt, and then he and four of his colleagues would get their orders and bunch together for a "rough takedown" and burst into a cell and "scream at a detainee" and drag him out and cut off his clothes. Then Buddy and his buddies would drag the prisoner "up and down a long corridor" where he would be "slapped and punched." But what can a person think when he is preparing to slap and punch a human being? He knows quite well that he is just about to inflict terrible pain on a helpless captive.

Is the slapper and puncher happy? Or totally unemotional? Is he convinced that he is serving his country by inflicting terrible pain on the shattered wreck of a human being? Does he think of his oath about "So help me, God"?

Was there a special instructional period given over to showing Buddy exactly how to "scream at a detainee"? How does an ordinary decent person who wants to serve his (or her) country descend into the deepest hell of depraved sadism? What makes these people want to inflict the direst pain and suffering on helpless humans?

Who chose the captive for them to torture each day? Was there a roster of "to be tortured" prisoners? The CIA had to admit that "detainees at the COBALT detention facility were kept in complete darkness and constantly shackled in isolated cells with loud noise or music and only a bucket to use for human waste." So perhaps it didn't matter from day to day which one was to be given the "rough takedown" by the CIA's defenders of democracy. But who was it who chose the sort of "loud noise or music" to be played fortissimo in the blacked-out cells of the shackled, crap-soiled terrified prisoners "agreeably to the Constitution and laws of the United States. So help me God" ?

What sort of person carefully selects the type and volume of noise to smash and petrify the senses? There must be a special day (week?) of instruction at the CIA's college of knowledge on how to choose torture music. There must be guidance as to exactly what sort of noise should be belted into the cells. And what about the number and positioning of loudspeakers? You can't do this sort of thing at random, because the victim might be able to move his head in order to lessen the ferocity of the blasting blare of shrieking animals or rap screechers. What goes through the mind of a person who designs torture by noise?

Remember : these torturers were giving of their best efforts in order, as the US Constitution has it, to "establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." Amen.

What words did Buddy and his buddies scream at the shackled, blinded and deafened prisoner who probably had a squittering crap down his legs before his tormentors burst in and then shat himself even more helplessly and disgustingly through sheer terror? What were their words? Did they shriek meaningless noises like animals? Or might there have been a chant of some sort

CIA! That's our Way!

We're gonna make you crap today!

Blessings of Liberty come to pass;

Take this humus up your ass!

Even the CIA had to admit that twenty-six — at the very least — of their tortured prisoners were totally innocent of even the tiniest offence against anyone in the world, never mind not being the slightest threat to the American Homeland. These were blameless, ordinary folks, tortured in the cause of freedom and democracy.

And remember, folks, always to use the folksy “folks”, as in the airy-fairy and so comfortable family phrase of the President of the United States that “we tortured some folks.” Doesn't that make it all sound nicer? Much more relaxed?

And the folks who carried out the torture? Were they relaxed? We can't imagine what these people were thinking when they brutalized helpless victims. Did they enjoy themselves? It's unlikely we shall ever know what goes on in the minds of the CIA's depraved sadists. Perhaps we should be thankful for that.