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[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

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## The Collapse of Western Morality

by Paul Craig Roberts

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Yes, I know, as many readers will be quick to inform me, the West never had any morality. Nevertheless things have gotten worse.

In hopes that I will be permitted to make a point, permit me to acknowledge that the US dropped nuclear bombs on two Japanese cities, fire-bombed Tokyo, that Great Britain and the US fire-bombed Dresden and a number of other German cities, expending more destructive force, according to some historians, against the civilian German population than against the German armies, that President Grant and his Civil War war criminals, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, committed genocide against the Plains Indians, that the US today enables Israel's genocidal policies against the Palestinians, policies that one Israeli official has compared to 19th century US genocidal policies against the American Indians, that the US in the new 21st century invaded Iraq and Afghanistan on contrived pretenses, murdering countless numbers of civilians, and that British prime minister Tony Blair lent the British army to his American masters, as did other NATO countries, all of whom find themselves committing war crimes under the Nuremberg standard in lands in which they have no national interests, but for which they receive an American pay check.

I don't mean these few examples to be exhaustive. I know the list goes on and on. Still, despite the long list of horrors, moral degradation is reaching new lows. The US now

routinely tortures prisoners, despite its strict illegality under US and international law, and a recent poll shows that the percentage of Americans who approve of torture is rising. Indeed, it is quite high, though still just below a majority.

And we have what appears to be a new thrill: American soldiers using the cover of war to murder civilians. Recently American troops were arrested for murdering Afghan civilians for fun and collecting trophies such as fingers and skulls.

This revelation came on the heels of Pfc. Bradley Manning's alleged leak of a US Army video of US soldiers in helicopters and their controllers thousands of miles away having fun with joy sticks murdering members of the press and Afghan civilians. Manning is cursed with a moral conscience that has been discarded by his government and his military, and Manning has been arrested for obeying the law and reporting a war crime to the American people.

US Rep. Mike Rogers, a Republican, of course, from Michigan, who is on the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, has called for Manning's execution. According to US Rep. Rogers it is an act of treason to report an American war crime.

In other words, to obey the law constitutes "treason to America."

US Rep. Rogers said that America's wars are being undermined by "a culture of disclosure" and that this "serious and growing problem" could only be stopped by the execution of Manning.

If Rep. Rogers is representative of Michigan, then Michigan is a state that we don't need.

The US government, a font of imperial hubris, does not believe that any act it commits, no matter how vile, can possibly be a war crime. One million dead Iraqis, a ruined country, and four million displaced Iraqis are all justified, because the "threatened" US Superpower had to protect itself from nonexistent weapons of mass destruction that the US government knew for a fact were not in Iraq and could not have been a threat to the US if they were in Iraq.

When other countries attempt to enforce the international laws that the Americans established in order to execute Germans defeated in World War II, the US government goes to work and blocks the attempt. A year ago on October 8, the Spanish Senate, obeying its American master, limited Spain's laws of universal jurisdiction in order to sink a legitimate war crimes case brought against George W. Bush, Barack H. Obama, Tony Blair, and Gordon Brown.

The West includes Israel, and there the horror stories are 60 years long. Moreover, if you mention any of them you are declared to be an anti-semitic. I only mention them in order to prove that I am not anti-American, anti-British, and anti-NATO, but am simply against war crimes. It was the distinguished Zionist Jewish Judge, Goldstone, who produced the UN report indicating that Israel committed war crimes when it attacked the civilian

population and civilian infrastructure of Gaza. For his efforts, Israel declared the Zionist Goldstone to be “a self-hating Jew,” and the US Congress, on instruction from the Israel Lobby, voted to disregard the Goldstone Report to the UN.

As the Israeli official said, we are only doing to the Palestinians what the Americans did to the American Indians.

The Israeli army uses female soldiers to sit before video screens and to fire by remote control machine guns from towers to murder Palestinians who come to tend their fields within 1500 meters of the inclosed perimeter of Ghetto Gaza. There is no indication that these Israeli women are bothered by gunning down young children and old people who come to tend to their fields.

If the crimes were limited to war and the theft of lands, perhaps we could say it is a case of jingoism sidetracking traditional morality, otherwise still in effect.

Alas, the collapse of morality is too widespread. Some sports teams now have a win-at-all-cost attitude that involves plans to injure the star players of the opposing teams. To avoid all these controversies, let’s go to Formula One racing where 200 mph speeds are routine.

Prior to 1988, 22 years ago, track deaths were due to driver error, car failure, and poorly designed tracks compromised with safety hazards. World Champion Jackie Stewart did much to improve the safety of tracks, both for drivers and spectators. But in 1988 everything changed. Top driver Ayrton Senna nudged another top driver Alain Prost toward a pit wall at 190 mph. According to AutoWeek (August 30, 2010), nothing like this had been seen before. “Officials did not punish Senna’s move that day in Portugal, and so a significant shift in racing began.” What the great racing driver Stirling Moss called “dirty driving” became the norm.

Nigel Roebuck in AutoWeek reports that in 1996 World Champion Damon Hill said that Senna’s win-at-all-cost tactic “was responsible for fundamental change in the ethics of the sport.” Drivers began using “terrorist tactics on the track.” Damon Hill said that “the views that I’d gleaned from being around my dad [twice world champion Graham Hill] and people like him, I soon had to abandon,” because you realized that no penalty was forthcoming against the guy who tried to kill you in order that he could win.

When asked about the ethics of modern Formula One racing, American World Champion Phil Hill said: “Doing that sort of stuff in my day was just unthinkable. For one thing, we believed certain tactics were unacceptable.”

In today’s Western moral climate, driving another talented driver into the wall at 200 mph is just part of winning. Michael Schumacher, born in January 1969, is a seven times World Champion, an unequaled record. On August 1 at the Hungarian Grand Prix, AutoWeek Reports that Schumacher tried to drive his former Ferrari teammate, Rubens Barrichello, into the wall at 200 mph speeds.

Confronted with his attempted act of murder, Schumacher said: “This is Formula One. Everyone knows I don’t give presents.”

Neither does the US government, nor state and local governments, nor the UK government, nor the EU.

The deformation of the police, which many Americans, in their untutored existence as naive believers in “law and order,” still think are “on their side,” has taken on new dimensions with the police militarized to fight “terrorists” and “domestic extremists.”

The police have been off the leash since the civilian police boards were nixed by the conservatives. Kids as young as 6 years old have been handcuffed and carted off to jail for school infractions that may or may not have occurred. So have moms with a car full of children (see, for example, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4AaSLERx0VM> ).

Anyone who googles videos of US police gratuitous brutality will call up tens of thousands of examples, and this is after laws that make filming police brutality a felony. A year or two ago such a search would call up hundreds of thousands of videos.

In one of the most recent of the numerous daily acts of gratuitous police abuse of citizens, an 84-year-old man had his neck broken because he objected to a night time towing of his car. The goon cop body-slammed the 84-year old and broke his neck. The Orlando, Florida, police department says that the old man was a “threat” to the well-armed much younger police goon, because the old man clenched his fist.

Americans will be the first people sent straight to Hell while thinking that they are the salt of the earth. The Americans have even devised a title for themselves to rival that of the Israelis’ self-designation as “God’s Chosen People.” The Americans call themselves “the indispensable people.”