

Hideous Kinky: Moral Nullity as Normality in Pentagon Plans

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Imagine growing up in a family where every day, father raped daughter, mother tortured son, brother abused brother, sister stole from sister, and the whole family murdered neighbors, friends and passing strangers. Imagine the underlying assumptions about life that you would adopt without question in such an atmosphere, how normal the most hideous depravity would seem. If some outsider chanced to ask you about your family's latest activities, you would spew out perversions as calmly and unthinkingly as a man giving directions to the post office.

This state of unwitting confession to monstrous crime has been the default mode of the American Establishment for many years now. Government officials routinely detail policies that in a healthy atmosphere would shake the nation to its core, stand out like a gaping wound, a rank betrayal of every hope, ideal and sacrifice of generations past. Yet in the degraded sensibility of these times, such confessions go unnoticed, their evil unrecognized – or even lauded as savvy ploys or noble endeavors. Inured to moral horror by half a century of outrages committed by the “National Security” complex, the Establishment – along with the media and vast swathes of the population – can no longer discern the poison in the air they breathe. It just seems normal.

And so it was again this week [when the Washington Post outlined the Pentagon's plan](#) to put dirty war – by death squad, by snatch squad, by secret armies, subversion, torture and terrorism– at the very heart of America's military philosophy. Not defense against declared enemies, not deterrence of potential foes, but conducting “continuous” covert military operations in countries “where the United States is not at war” is now the Pentagon's “highest priority,” according to the new “campaign plan for the global war on terror” issued by Donald Rumsfeld.

What's more, the plan makes it clear that Rumsfeld, far from being politically vulnerable – as portrayed in the ludicrous kabuki of the Establishment media – has in fact been exalted above every other institution and official of the U.S. government, with the exception of the twin tyrants in the White House, George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. The Pentagon warlord has been given carte blanche to send the 53,000 secret soldiers of the Special Operations Command into any nation he pleases, to undertake any mission he pleases, without Congressional approval, legal restraint, or the authority of the target nation's U.S. ambassador. Thus America's diplomats, the ostensible representatives of the nation abroad, have been reduced to mere frontmen, pathetic beards for black ops savaging the laws, sovereignty and citizens of their hosts.

The “campaign plan” is the culmination and codification of an ad hoc array of programs and

powers that Bush has doled out to Rumsfeld over the years, including a series of executive orders signed after the 2004 election that essentially turned the world into a “global free-fire zone” for the Pentagon’s secret armies and proxy foreign militias, [as a top Pentagon official told Seymour Hersh](#) . “We’re going to be riding with the bad boys,” another Bush insider said. Yet another courtier compared it to the glory days of the Reagan-Bush years: “Do you remember the right-wing execution squads in El Salvador? We founded them and we financed them. The objective now is to recruit locals in any area we want. And we aren’t going to tell Congress about it.” The overriding ethos of the plan is, like its progenitors Bush and Rumsfeld, brutally simple: “The rules are ‘Grab whom you must. Do what you want,’” an intelligence official explained to Hersh.

Perhaps most ominously, the plan makes copious preparations for expanding the range of the terror war even further. The trigger for these new actions is another terrorist strike on American soil. Oddly enough, the Bush Faction considers such an unspeakable horror as an “opportunity,” Pentagon officials told the Post; it would provide a “justification,” they said, for hitting already targeted individuals, groups and states that for various political reasons have not yet been subjected to what Bush likes to call, in his bloodthirsty parlance, “the path of action.”

But perhaps this is not so odd. After all, even as the poisonous smoke was still rising from the ruins of the World Trade Center in September 2001, Bush giddily declared that “through my tears, I see opportunity.” We now know exactly what he saw: the opportunity to launch the long-determined invasion of Iraq, even though he knew that his stated reasons for the war were false, as Tyler Drumheller, the CIA’s top man in Europe before the war, noted this week. [Drumheller told CBS](#) that his team had direct intelligence from Saddam’s inner circle confirming Iraq’s dearth of WMD – intelligence backed up by multiple sources — but the White House told him it didn’t matter. They had decided on war and “were looking for intelligence to fit into the policy” – the formula for falsehood revealed in the “Downing Street Memos” uncovered in 2004. Predictably, this latest smoking gun evidence of the most heinous war crime imaginable – launching a war of aggression based knowingly on a false and manufactured threat (the precise equivalent of Hitler’s invasion of Poland in 1939) – was instantly deep-sixed by the Establishment media, like all the other proofs of the Regime’s criminal perfidy that have surfaced briefly over the years.

But of course this is not the only malevolent “opportunity” seized by the Bush Regime. Since October 2002, following up on deep-delving investigative work by William Arkin, we’ve been tracking another “opportunistic” endeavor: the Pentagon’s plan to foment terrorism by infiltrating terrorist groups and militias and goading them into action – i.e., committing acts of murder and destruction – in order to “flush them out” for counterattacks or use them to advance American policy in targeted states, including “justification” for U.S. military intervention or occupation. (More details can be found [here](#) and [here](#) .) Perhaps some of Rumsfeld’s infiltrators were “riding with the bad boys” [who struck in Dahab, Egypt](#) this week. With unrestricted black ops now ascendant, we can never know for sure. But we do know that each act of terror only enhances the power of the ever-expanding national security complex, entwining it in a mutually beneficial embrace with violent extremists everywhere.

Rumsfeld’s “campaign plan” is itself a blueprint for state terrorism, an open license to break any and every law on earth and inflict mass human suffering on a global scale. Yet the only controversial aspect of this sinister program noted by the Post was the potential turf battles

it might spark within the national security bureaucracy. Not a single question was raised about the morality or legality of the undertaking; the Pentagon's assertion that only "bad guys" would be hit was simply swallowed whole – despite the glaring fact that tens of thousands of innocent people have already been killed or falsely imprisoned in the so-called "war on terror."

But this depravity passes without comment, without recognition. It's just normal, you see. It's the way we were raised.

This is an extended version of a column appearing in the April 28 edition of The Moscow Times.

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