

# Obama's "Love Letter" to the CIA Distorts Historical Truth

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One can only wonder what prompted the incredible absurdities written by President Obama in his April 16th love letter to the employees of the Central Intelligence Agency(CIA). It not only absolves CIA torturers from prosecution on the grounds that they were only following orders, (the same defense employed by Nazi hoodlums at the Nuremburg war crimes trials after World War Two,) but his laudatory statements about The Agency fly in the face of the historical record. Obama's letter surely will go down in history as one of the most disingenuous documents ever to appear under the presidential seal. Worse, it strongly hints the American public has elected another in that long line of imperial presidents stretching back to William McKinley.

To anyone with a nodding familiarity of the history of The Agency, the greatest balderdash of all is Obama's statement to employees that "Your work has informed every President dating back to President Truman and it protects our people." In fact, "misinformed" would be a much better description of the CIA's intelligence product as its egregious errors have misled presidents so often on so many major events there are periods when it seems to have gotten nothing right and everything wrong.

President Truman feared the CIA would degenerate into an American "Gestapo," (Truman's word) and, far from protecting the American people, the CIA's lawless methods have inflamed much of the civilized world against America.

Don't take my word for that! During the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, the CIA's own inspector general issued a report excoriating the Agency for its use of terror methods. In his book "Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA," New York *Times* reporter Tim Weiner writes: "The report implicated every living CIA officer who had served as chief of the clandestine service—Allen Dulles, Richard Bissell, Richard Helms, and Desmond Fitzgerald—in conspiracies to commit murder." (This is the Agency Obama says upholds our laws?)

About the same time, then Secretary of State Dean Rusk ordered his intelligence chief Tom Hughes to conduct his own probe of the CIA's covert operations. Hughes reported back, Weiner writes, "that buying foreign politicians, supporting foreign coups, and running guns to foreign rebels could corrode American values. He proposed that the United States should cut covert action 'to an irreducible minimum.'"

One wonders why a nation that President Obama celebrates as "a nation of laws" whose administration "will always act in accordance with the law" in the same document declares, "I have fought for the principle that the United States must carry out covert activities..."

What kind of principle is that to fight for? Neither Moses descending from Sinai or Jesus on the Mount uttered any words that justified the sort of criminal conduct the CIA in our times conceals under the rubric of “covert action.”

Quite the contrary! Just imagine the hell and misery the Middle East would have been spared if President Eisenhower had not agreed to the CIA’s plan to overthrow the elected government of Iran in 1953! Imagine what the people of Chile would have been spared if President Nixon had not okayed the CIA plot to overthrow the elected president, Salvador Allende, in 1973! Imagine! Imagine! All across Latin America, from Argentina to Guatemala, in a score of nations, hundreds of thousands of innocent people would be alive today if the CIA had not financed, armed and abetted militarists that overthrew elected governments and then inflicted a reign of terror on the citizenry.

After the CIA’s extensive history of crimes from drug-running to subverting free elections to torture to assassination, for President Obama to praise The Agency and indicate he endorses its covert activities should set off alarm bells around the world.

As for Obama’s statement “The men and women of our intelligence community serve courageously on the front lines of a dangerous world,” one must ask how much courage it takes for an illegal posse of CIA thugs to kidnap an unarmed civilian off the streets of, say, Milan, Italy, and transport him to another country for torture? How much courage does it take to beat up a man tied in a chair or to slam a man’s head into a wall when his hands are tied behind his back? Forgive me if this smells a whole lot like cowardice, not courage. The unlimited “rendition” spree authorized by the last President Bush was nothing new for the Agency, either. Weiner writes the CIA had been running “secret interrogation centers before—beginning in 1950, in Germany, Japan, and Panama. It had participated in the torture of captured enemy combatants before—beginning in 1967, under the Phoenix program in Vietnam.” Folks, this has been a rogue agency from its inception.

By failing to prosecute the CIA officials’ criminal practices of rendition and torture and declaring his administration “will stand by them,” Obama betrays his sworn obligation to uphold the Constitution of the United States, a document that enshrines human rights and makes the Geneva Convention, among other treaties, the supreme law of the land. The CIA is an agency with a long and ugly history of crimes and atrocities perpetrated on a global scale. The world would be better off if the President abolished it, rather than commended it. To fail to prosecute its current crop of gangsters, much less to shower them with public praise, is an act of gross misfeasance.

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