

Pentagon's New "Law of War" Manual "Reduces Us to the Level of Nazis"

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Pentagon Goes Barbarian

The Pentagon's new Law of War Manual – a [1,200-plus page document](#) issued in June by the Defense Department's Office of the General Counsel – is barbaric.

The Manual is so bad that one of the leading experts on the law of war (Dr. Francis Boyle) – who wrote the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989, the American implementing legislation for the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, served on the Board of Directors of Amnesty International, and teaches international law at the University of Illinois, Champaign – says :

This Law of War Manual reduces us to the level of Nazis. There's no other word for it.

Boyle also says the Manual:

Reads like it was written by Hitler's Ministry of War.

Why is the Manual so bad?

Manual Authorizes Slaughter of Innocent Civilians

Because – according to Boyle – the Manual allows massacres of *civilian populations*. The most comprehensive previous such document – the 1956 Pentagon field manual – assumed that any deliberate targeting of civilians was illegal and a war crime.

Reporters Can Be Assassinated

And the Manual treats allows reporters to be treated as ["unprivileged combatants"](#), who can be assassinated.

Boyle points out that this retroactively legalizes assassination of reporters, such as Al Jazeera reporters during Iraq war. Boyle notes that even a SPY would be treated better, and given a trial.

(As we've previously noted, the U.S. government [treats real reporters as terrorists](#). Because the core things which reporters do [could be considered terrorism](#), in modern America,

journalists are sometimes targeted under [counter-terrorism laws](#).)

Manual Authorizes Barbarous War Crimes

Boyle also says the Manual [authorizes](#) the following barbarous war crimes:

(1) Warfare with nuclear weapons. Specifically, the manual states:

There is no general prohibition in treaty or customary international law on the use of nuclear weapons.

This flies in the face of the United Nations Charter, which – as noted by the World Court in its Advisory Opinion on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons – makes even *threatening* to use nuclear weapons a war crime.

This is also particularly worrisome because – as documented in [Towards a World War III Scenario](#), by Michel Chossudovsky – the U.S. is so enamored with nuclear weapons that it has authorized low-level field commanders to use them in the heat of battle in their sole discretion ... without any approval from civilian leaders.

2. Depleted uranium. The [use](#) of [depleted uranium](#) can cause cancer and birth defects for decades (see [this](#), [this](#), [this](#), [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#)).

3. Landmines.

4. Cluster bombs.

5. Napalm, which is banned under Protocol III of the 1980 UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

6. Expanding hollow-point bullets, banned under the 1868 St. Petersburg declaration.

7. Herbicides, like Agent Orange in Vietnam.

The Good News

The good news – according to Dr. Boyle – is that both Congress and the president have power to revoke the Manual.

So – if we stand up and raise holy hell – we might be able to walk back from the fascist path we're heading down. And we can prove that we're not the rogue nation that the [rest of the world thinks](#) we are.

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