

TORTURE, INTERROGATION AND INTELLIGENCE

What I want you to keep in mind as you read this is that we are to assume the following situation: We have somebody in our custody, who we believe has knowledge of an impending terrorist attack, and we think that attack could be VERY serious, but we have less than five days to find out what this person knows about the impending attack.

In this piece, I'm going to specifically address using drugs known as "truth serums" as the means by which we get the intelligence that we need. Some would call this a form of torture.

I want you to know that I don't glory torture for its own sake. I accept it as a means to survival.

To digress for a moment, and to add a little humor to it, I don't get any pleasure inflicting pain on anybody, unless you're a quarterback. I hate quarterbacks. I was a linebacker. Quarterbacks live a charmed life. Think about it. A quarterback never had zits as a kid. He never sweat. He always got the best looking cheerleader. He or his parents always had the best car. The teachers and coaches would let him get away with murder, and yet call him a saint. He always had his picture on the front cover of the football guide and the game-day program. He was the class valedictorian. He never had to dig ditches in 100-degree heat in the summer to make money. Even during practice, he got to wear a different color jersey from anybody else. He could sit down, kneel down, slide down, fall down, lie down, down the damn ball or throw it away, and if you even breathed on him you got penalized 15 yards for roughing the quarterback. I ask you, when was the last time you ever saw any official at any football game -- peewee through the pros -- ever throw flag on anybody for roughing the linebacker? I rest my case.

When Israel suffers a terrorist attack, almost invariably they retaliate within 24 hours. The reason that they can do this is that they have the world's best human intelligence (humint), and they know how to interrogate people. Their intelligence is so good and they keep it so current that they know who has attacked them, and they already have plans in existence for retaliation. Their humint sources are not just Israelis, but actual members of the society on which they are spying. They use humint and supplement it by signal intelligence (sigint). We do it just ass-backwards, because we CAN'T do it the way the Israeli's do it -- we simply do not have enough people on the ground. It takes \$500,000-1,000,000 and 3-5 years to train and put in place a good humint source (assume this is an American hired by, say, the CIA, to try and infiltrate some terrorist group). NOTHING that is going on at present can quickly change this equation or situation. Forget the hearings, the posturing, the proposals, the realignments, the debate. It's all based on the INCORRECT

assumption that we already have the tools, they just need to be rearranged. We do NOT have all the tools and no flow chart or organization chart can change that.

The Geneva Convention was not signed by any terrorist group. No terrorist should be provided any protection whatsoever under the Geneva Convention.

We are supposed to be a nation of laws. If you are not a United States citizen, don't expect protection of our laws.

Therefore, no terrorist -- whether running free or in custody -- is entitled to any protection under any international law to which we are a signatory or law of the United States.

Most of what follows is what I have learned from Israelis, South Koreans, Russians, as well as Americans.

I want to address several fallacies of interrogation.

Fallacy #1. Torture never works, because a prisoner will tell the interrogators whatever they want to hear just to stop the torture.

That's based on a faulty assumption. That faulty assumption is that, if you act on the fabricated intelligence provided by the prisoner, and then you find out that it is not correct, that the prisoner does not have to pay a price for lying. Before you ask the prisoner for information, you tell that prisoner that if he or she lies, you will torture the prisoner, the family, the friends, the parakeet, whomever. And then do it.

Fallacy #2. Any prisoner can outwit his or her interrogators.

This doesn't work with interrogators who are members of a free society, and have very good to excellent intelligence sources to confirm and verify what a prisoner says.

Part of this fallacy was created as a result of what our American POWs told their North Vietnamese interrogators, when those POWs were held in and around Hanoi during the Vietnam War.

North Vietnam was a closed society. That society only heard and saw what their leaders wanted them to hear and see. Our prisoners' Code of Conduct was changed in response to the brutal torture that our POW's endured.

Our POWs held out under that torture as long as they could. When they could hold out no longer, they made up something to stop the torture. Incredibly, and to show you how stupid and uninformed the North Vietnamese were, our POWs made up names of superior officers. These names included General Mills (the cereal company), Major Domo, Captain Video, etc. The North Vietnamese interrogators dutifully wrote down this information, smiled smugly, and assumed that they had extracted critical information from their prisoners.

In this sense, yes, the prisoners did outwit the interrogators. In contrast, when our POWs were interrogated by Russians, Cubans, East Germans, and Bulgarians, when they tried to pull the same stunt as they did with the North Vietnamese, our guys were beaten, starved, and tortured unmercifully. Our guys said that you could fool North Vietnamese, but don't even think about trying it with those other guys.

Fallacy #3. Torture as a means of interrogation is generally not accepted throughout the world.

In point of fact, **within the last three years, more than three-quarters of all countries in the world have practiced torture as a means of interrogation.** This applies to their own citizens, as well as foreigners, whether combatants or not.

Bleeding hearts just don't get it. On the one hand, they kept telling us to allow the weapons inspectors in Iraq more and more and more time and more and more and more time to uncover weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, once the President declared an end to major combat operations in Iraq, the bleeding hearts started screeching that the rebuilding and democratization of Iraq wasn't happening fast enough. On the third hand, they run their hands at how quickly we had placed prisoners into detention facilities. This herky-jerky, stop-and-go, inconsistency is nothing more than political opportunism.

Even the ACLU got involved, not on behalf of Americans, but on behalf of our enemies. If you didn't know this, read this and burn it in your memory: The ACLU was founded by a card-carrying member of the Communist Party. You should never again wonder why the ACLU is trying to tear apart the moral and legal fiber of this country.

Fallacy #4. These things called "truths serums" don't really work.

They do work to varying degrees of success.

There are three primary truth serums.

Here they are.

Scopolamine (scopolamine hydrobromide; first word pronounced: skoh-PAW-lah-mean), also known by another name -- hyoscine (hyoscine hydrobromide). It is colorless, odorless and tasteless. Its clinical uses are primarily as a sedative, and applied locally (directly) as a mydriatic, which causes the pupil of the eye to dilate. When used as a sedative, the primary uses are to combat vertigo and motion sickness. When used with morphine and pentobarbital, to a woman in labor, it produces a "twilight sleep." It is also used as a premedication preliminary to surgery anesthesia.

Since scopolamine completely blocks the formation of memories, unlike most date-rape drugs used in the United States and elsewhere, it is usually impossible for victims to ever identify their aggressors (or interrogators, if you were a prisoner).

To use scopolamine most effectively to get a prisoner to tell you what he or she knows, the key is where you inject it, and in what amounts. Normally it is introduced into the body by a transdermal patch or intravenously in the arm. However, **if you inject it into the spine (amount classified), it causes absolutely incredible pain, accompanied by violent convulsions and seizures.** If injected into the spine in the appropriate amount, more than 95% of all prisoners will tell the truth -- not something fabricated to stop the pain -- within 24 hours (Source: classified).

A far milder form of psychological abuse involves exposing prisoners (intravenously or orally) to sodium pentathol—commonly known as "truth serum." Sodium pentathol is an ultra-short-acting barbiturate that depresses the central nervous system, slows heart rate, and lowers blood pressure. In the relaxed state produced by the drug, subjects are more susceptible to suggestion and are therefore easier to interrogate. The drug does not actually guarantee that prisoners will tell the truth, however. Often, it makes subjects "gabby" without revealing any important information.

Sodium amythal, also known as a type of "truth serum," with its clinical application in psychoanalysis, is used primarily to help in memory recovery and dealing with "false" memories. If you can confuse the prisoner as to what is a real memory and what is a false memory, you might be able to crack their resistance to telling the truth. However, if the prisoner is smart, he or she will simply shut up and you'll get nothing from them.

What is interesting is that a prisoner could have been subjected to a truth serum singularly, or two or three over enough time given the appropriate washout of the prisoner's system, and flatly state that he or she did not tell his or her interrogators anything. From his or her perspective, he or she is telling the truth -- because he or she has no memory of telling interrogators anything. That's the truth in his or her own mind, but it is not the fact of the situation.

In terms of training individuals to resist the three aforementioned truth serums, it is easiest to train someone to resist the sodium amythal, followed by sodium pentathol. There is no known training that will allow anyone to resist scopolamine, when injected into the spine in the correct amount.

What you don't want to do is "stack" scopolamine with sodium pentathol and sodium amythal. "Stacking" means adding one drug on top of another before the previous drug(s) has/have washed out of the system. You stack on somebody, you'll kill them.

When time is not a consideration, and when used in conjunction with skilled interrogators on a prisoner who has not been trained to resist the effects, sodium pentathol and sodium amythal will get you the truth in approximately 10% to one third of the cases. When the truth absolutely positively has to be there within five days, forget them – use scopolamine injected into the spine.

I don't honestly know if we have used any of these truth serums on Saddam Hussein. Too bad if we didn't. My clearance doesn't extend that high. For those of you who don't know -- and to oversimplify it -- there are four different levels of security clearances. They are: secret; top-secret; top-secret/code word; beyond top-secret/code word. The words "code word" could be something like UMBRA. So if I had that level, I would be cleared top-secret/UMBRA, which means I would be allowed to see or hear anything that is secret, top-secret, and -- separately -- anything that is classified under the code word UMBRA.

In 1909, before World War I, there were a number of terrorist attacks on the United States forces in the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, by Muslim extremists. General "Black Jack" Pershing was the appointed military governor of the Moro Province. He captured 50 terrorists and ordered them to be tied to posts for execution. Since all the prisoners were Muslim, he asked his men to bring two pigs and slaughter them in front of the prisoners. He then proceeded by dipping bullets into the pig's blood.

In the process he executed 49 of the terrorists by firing squad. Then, the soldiers dug a big hole in the ground and dumped in the terrorists' bodies and covered them in pig's blood and viscera. The last man was set free. For 42 years there was not a single Muslim attack anywhere in the world.

His rationale was quite simple and effective. Since a radical Muslim is willing to give his life for his religion in a Jihad war, killing him would not make much difference. He would be seen as a martyr (*shahada*).

But the General knew that all Muslims believe in eternal life after death with 72 virgins waiting for them in paradise. He also knew that those that embrace

Jihad usually prepare themselves physically and spiritually in case they die in combat.

Since the pig is considered forbidden food (*haram*) in Islam, Pershing introduced this variable to thwart their hopes to enter Allah's kingdom. The pig's blood automatically nullified any prior purification by contaminating their bodies.

My interrogation technique is quite simple. I follow General Pershing's example and order a pig to be slaughtered near the prisoner. The blood of the animal runs freely toward the prisoner's feet. He will immediately lift his knees to avoid making contact with it. I fill a syringe with the pig's blood and threaten to inject him in the arm. The prisoner will talk -- and quickly.

Fair? Depends on your perspective. Effective? Extremely.

A century ago, General Pershing's quick thinking installed a great fear in a large sector of the Muslim population in Mindanao putting an end to any type of subversion in an Island that resents the presence of non-Muslims.

Last, here are a few tips in terms of determining if who you have in custody really is a Muslim: Since most of the concentration is on Islamic terrorism, these are a few signs that very few people know about.

A serious Muslim that prays 5 times a day has a small dark discoloration on his forehead.

If he wears jewelry, it has to be silver and not gold -- usually a silver ring with a space inside where there is a passage from the Koran.

Another important pointer comes from physical anthropology, and deals with faces and body structures. A real Muslim keeps his left hand away from his food, usually under the table.

Bottom line: there are effective ways to get the truth from a prisoner under interrogation. Some work better than others. When drugs are used, both the person administering the drug, as well as the interrogator, must be expert at their profession. When time is the most important consideration, you're left with very few options. Whatever the situation, KNOW YOUR ENEMY.

What I say here are my own opinions, based upon fact. They are not to be construed as the policy or official position of APUS. As always, you are free to accept or reject anything I say, and verify it by any means you wish.

Thank you.

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